



# News Release

**For immediate release:** January 20, 2010

(10-007)

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## **Sexual misconduct charges lead to immediate suspension**

*King County health care provider ordered to stop practicing*

**OLYMPIA** — The respiratory care practitioner and massage therapist licenses of Richard M. Garcia have been suspended immediately by the state Department of Health.

This action means Garcia (RESP.LR.00001273 and MASS.MA.00006364) cannot practice or work as a respiratory care practitioner or massage therapist in Washington pending a hearing.

According to legal documents, Garcia allegedly engaged in sexual misconduct with a vulnerable patient who was physically impaired and developmentally delayed. The patient was connected to a ventilator and unable to speak. Charges say Garcia put the patient's hand on his penis and used it to masturbate himself to ejaculation. On another occasion, he allegedly rubbed lotion on her breasts and near her vagina when he was supposed to provide respiratory care.

Consumers who believe a health care provider acted unprofessionally are encouraged to call the state Department of Health at 360-236-4700 to report their complaint. A [complaint form is also on the agency's Web site](http://www.doh.wa.gov/hsqa/Professions/documents/complaint.pdf) (<http://www.doh.wa.gov/hsqa/Professions/documents/complaint.pdf>).

Directions are listed for mailing, e-mailing, or faxing the completed form to the agency's Health Systems Quality Assurance division.

The Department of Health protects and promotes public health, safety, and welfare in Washington by regulating the competency and quality of health care providers. The agency establishes, monitors, and enforces qualifications for licensing, consistent standards of practice, continuing competency mechanisms, and discipline. Rules, policies, and procedures promote the delivery of quality health care to people in Washington.

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